

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

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Whole No. 440

The Anatomy of Dime Novels

No. 15—Stories of World Wide Adventure

By J. Edward Leithead



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 113

WIDE AWAKE LIBRARY—SPECIAL

Publisher: Frank Tousey, 34 & 36 Moore St., New York, N. Y. Dates: September 28, 1883 to February 6, 1885. Schedule of Issue: The first few were issued at irregular intervals. Later issues were issued weekly. Issue:: 43 (highest number seen advertised). Price: 10c. Size: 11½x8 inches. Pages: 32 and in many cases more. Illustrations: Black and white cover and many inner black and white illustrations, many full page. Contents: Comic stories reprinted from Tousey story papers. Of special interest are the first three issues which are about Frank James.

The Anatomy of Dime Novels

No. 15—Stories of World Wide Adventure

By J. Edward Leithead

The dictionary says, ADVENTURE: a hazardous or exciting experience; daring feat; commercial venture.

The first two definitions apply to that type of fiction of which boy and men readers—and some of the feminine gender—never seem to tire. For those who preferred a variety of stories, different characters, different settings every week, there were plenty of dime novels in the old days to supply the demand.

I believe that Frank Tousey's Pluck and Luck was the most popular of the color cover adventure weeklies, yet all its stories had seen previous publication in a black-and-white library, Wide Awake, and story papers such as Boys of New York, Young Men of America, Golden Weekly and Happy Days. The first issue of Pluck and Luck was dated January 12, 1898, the same year that Tousey's Young Klondike, Young Glory and Yankee Doodle were launched, and an artist named A. Berghaus did the cover illustrations for all these and more until October, 1902, or a bit later. He was succeeded in this art work for the Tousey publications by an artist of exceptional talent whose name, lost, at least temporarily, in the mists of time, we collectors of the dime novel would like very much to know.

Pluck and Luck had stories of the early American frontier, the frontier West, the Revolutionary War and the Civil War, detective-mystery stories and stories of the circus, even of Wild West shows. Stories of famous Westerners like Buffalo Bill, Kit Carson, Yellowstone Kelly, Pawnee Bill

and General Custer. There was a good series about a frontiersman named Pand y Ellis: Pand y Ellis, the Prairie Prince, or, The Shadow Scout of Red River, Gold Gulch, or, Pand y Ellis' Last Trail, The Marked Moccasin, or, Pand y Ellis' Pard, to mention three, all by St. George Rathborne under the pseudonym "Marline Manly," first appearing in Young Men of America, and, with the exception of Pand y Ellis, the Prairie Prince, being reprinted in Pluck and Luck twice under nom. "An Old Scout."

You adventured all over the world in Pluck and Luck, from the Western plains to the jungles and the deserts of the Far East to the North Pole, the seven seas. Many were the stories of city life, often with a New York background. You could make a night run on a railroad as a youthful engineer, fight a big fire as a young fire chief, crusade for temperance in the big towns at the turn of the century. You could be a bareback rider in a circus or ride after cattle with the gauchos of South America. Or invent one-time unbelievable contraptions like Jack Wright (all of whose stories were authored by Lu Senarens).

Francis Worcester Doughty, creator of Old King Brady, contributed a variety of stories to Pluck and Luck under the pseudonyms "Robert Maynard," "Paul Braddon," "Allyn Draper," "Howard Austin," "Allan Arnold" and "Berton Bertrew." But these noms. were also shared by writers of other tales reprinted, like Doughty's, in Pluck and Luck—George W. Goode, W. Howard Van Orden, Har-

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vey K. Shackelford.

Doughty had written a bunch of circus stories in Happy Days under noms. "Robert Maynard," "P. T. Raymond" and "R. T. Emmet." These were the source of most of the Pluck and Luck circus stories. Railroad stories signed "Jas. C. Merritt" in that weekly were Doughty's, and over the nom. "Captain Thos. H. Wilson" he wrote sea stories. He was the first editor of Happy Days.

This great all-reprint weekly ran to 874 issues, reaching this number on March 15, 1915, and started reprinting the "reprints." It had done this before, as a matter of fact, beginning with No. 451, but leaving out many of the early numbers. Between 451 and 874, 62 were early Pluck and Lucks reprinted, the rest, although published at some other time in some other publication, were new to the pages of Pluck and Luck. It ceased publication with No. 1605, dated Mar. 6, 1929. But it had run the gantlet of time for over 30 years.

One of Tousey's "Big Six" was Fame and Fortune Weekly, No. 1 of which was on the newsstands (and in cigar store windows) October 6, 1905. Its sub-title was Stories of Boys Who Make Money, and the author of these tales was James Perkins Tracy. In the main these were Wall Street stories and some that followed the Alger formula, but there were also rousing adventure type tales, with fame and fortune as the hero's goals or a treasure find by lucky chance, such as No. 165, Lost in the Tropics, or, The Treasure of Turtle Key, 183, On the Gold Coast, or, The Treasure of the Lost Ship, 227, The Lure of Gold, or, The Treasure of Coffin Rock, 245, Adrift on the Orinoco, or, The Treasure of the Desert, 271, A Pirate's Treasure, or, The Secret of the Three Wrecks, 275, Island Number Ten, or, The Secret of the Sunken Gold Ship.

The following were still another type of "fame and fortune," without the Wall Street or other city backdrop, all of them proving James Perkins Tracy a very versatile writer: No. 187, Jack Jasper's Venture, or,

A Canal Route to Fortune, 207, Air Line Ed, or, Building a Telegraph Line, 211, Claim No. 7, or, A Fortune from a Gold Mine, 213, The Boy Ice King, or, Coining Money from the River.

Fame and Fortune was a color cover weekly, of course, and had 488 original stories. From No. 489 onward all stories were reprints of the earlier numbers. It ended with No. 1197, Sept. 7, 1928, while on its third reprinting.

Wide Awake Weekly, another color cover Tousey publication began April 20, 1906 and ended July 2, 1909, after 168 issues. The weekly started with adventure and success stories similar to Fame and Fortune, but Nos. 37 through 40 were fire stories by "Robert Lennox" (probably Harrie Irving Hancock) and No. 41 introduced Young Wide Awake, a brave boy fireman who, with his "Fire Boys of Belmont," fought every conceivable type of fire including a fire in a coal mine, a real chiller. I believe Hancock wrote this series, some of them at least. With No. 137 another attempt to capitalize on the success of Frank Merriwell was launched with the introduction of Dick Daresome's adventures at school and in athletics. This latest series ended the weekly with No. 168.

All Around Weekly, started by Lu Senarens when he was editor of Tousey publications (as well as a contributor to them for many years), was the last new dime novel series to be issued from the House of Tousey. The first number appeared October 29, 1909, and it lasted 72 issues, folding March 10, 1911. It had some very good color covers, but actually the stories were not new, being reprints from Young Men of America and Boys Star Weekly. It afforded the reader seeking variety in adventure tales a wide choice.

There were Westerns — No. 4, "Phantom," the Prairie Trapper, 15, The Secret Glen, or, The Mysterious War Chief—railroad stories, No. 1, Engineer Ned, or, Running the Night Express, 42, Danger Signal Dave, the Dashing Boy Engineer of the West—

several war stories (the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War)—one about the circus, several about boy firemen and temperance stories; but mostly they were laid in foreign lands: No. 16, *Lost in the Heart of China*, 28, *The Young Cliff Climber*, or, *A Tale of the Andes*, 29, *The Ourang Outang Hunters*, or, *Adventures in the Dark Continent*, 40, *The Boy Wizard of the Nile*, or, *The Mystery of Pharaoh's Temple*, 45, *The Golden Skull*, or, *A Boy's Adventures in Australia*, 46, *Pacific Dick*. A *Stirring Tale of the Indian Islands*.

Street & Smith's big adventure weekly was *Brave and Bold*, with 429 issues, December 27, 1902, to March 11, 1911. It reprinted stories from Norman L. Munro's *Golden Hours* and Street & Smith's own *Good News*. Also quite a number of "Gordon Keith" detective stories which were English Sexton Blake stories, often with little change in them except the name of "Keith" substituted for "Blake," and Blake's assistant "Tinker" changed to "Checkers." These Sexton Blake reprints began with No. 159, *"That Boy Checkers"*; others were 168, *The African Trail*, 172, *Under Many Suns*, or, *Gordon Keith's Longest Chase*, 181, *The Lost Chief*, or, *Gordon Keith's Adventures Among the Redskins*, 184, *On Sampan and Junk*, or, *Gordon Keith Adrift in China*, 210, *Gordon Keith in Java*, 240, *Among the Witch-doctors*, et al.

There were quite a few more, and altogether these Gordon Keith issues make a nice little collection of detective stories, with the color covers by S. & S. artists. You will notice that the publishers selected only Sexton Blakes which took him to foreign lands, in keeping with the policy of making *Brave and Bold* a world wide adventure weekly. The stories were all signed "Lawrence White, Jr." giving no clue to the English authors who had written them.

Brave and Bold had numerous Western stories:

169—*The Border Scouts*, or, *California Joe's War Trail*, by Captain Frederick Whittaker (a reprint from *Beadle's ½ Dime Lib.* 395)

171—*Double-Bar Ranch*.

173—*Moonlight Morgan*.

174—*The Girl Rancher*.

178—*The Lone Range Rider*, or, *Among the Rustlers of the Bad Lands*.

179—*Warbling William*, or, *The Singing Detective of Rocket Range*.

190—*Captain Mystery*, or, *The Brave Girl of Boulder Bar*.

Alger type stories and stories of young athletes, baseball and football: 200—*Young Giants of the Gridiron*, or *Fighting for the Football Pennant*.

228—*Jack Leonard, Catcher*.

238—*The Rival Nines*.

281—*Nimble Jerry*, the *Young Athlete*.

336—*Archie Atwood, Champion*.

Circus stories:

132—*Nimble Nick*, the *Circus Prince*. 219—*Afloat With a Circus*.

224—*The Elephant Boy*.

296—*Ahead of the Show*.

341—*Bob*, the *Acrobat*.

347—*A Young Snake-charmer*.

Later issues reprinted tales from Street & Smith's *Might and Main*, *Bowery Boy Library*, *Motor Stories* (*Motor Matt*) and *Boys of Liberty Library*—No. 370, *The Boys of Liberty*, 376, *The Young Guardsman*, 380, *The Young Ambassador*, 382, *The Young Patriot*, 389, *Fighting Hal*, 393, *Fooling the Enemy*, 397, *The Green Mountain Boys*, 406, *Fighting the Redcoats*, 408, *In the Colonial Navy*.

Might and Main Library, bearing the imprint of *Winner Library Co.* (Street & Smith) had 80 issues, Feb. 24, 1906 to August 31, 1907. Color covers by all the S. & S. staff artists, Johnson, Wrenn, Russell, Owen—not F. A. Carter, who hadn't joined the staff when *Might and Main* folded. I have only one title here, No. 43, *His One Ambition*, or, *The Mishaps of a Boy Reporter*, by "One of the Boys." Cover art by Marmaduke Russell: the young reporter saving a young girl from being run down by a runaway team on a New York street. Dated Dec. 15, 1906. The subtitle of this library was *Stories of Boys Who Succeed*, and it featured success type tales from George Sib-

ley's Golden Library, published in the 1880's, and Golden Hours.

Following is a good example of a "dime novel" adventure story, published by Frank Tousey as No. 48 of All Around Weekly—After the Big Diamond, or, The Star on the Arm, by "Ed. King" (A Story of India). It is dated Sept. 23, 1910 in All Around, but was printed first in Young Men of America, Nos. 50-58, by T. W. Hanshew (real name) under the title, Thado the Thug, or, The Star on the Arm. A Romance of the Mysteries of India, Aug. 22, 1878, to Oct. 24, 1878. Reprinted No. 225 Boys Star Library and No. 48 All Around:

"Darkness—night in India. Four figures passing up a lonely road. A zigzag streak of lightning, a rumble of thunder—crash! A dusky figure leaped from the trees, a long strip of cloth dangling in his right hand. He glided toward the last straggler of the four.

"A shriek of pain, abruptly choked to silence as three of the figures turned quickly. The road behind was deserted, their companion gone. For an instant they glanced from one to another as though suddenly stricken dumb, then one boy spoke:

"You hear that?"

"It was Haywood, but where is he now?"

"Some savage beast may have jumped him and dragged him back out of sight," ventured Will Hazell, who had spoken first.

"Oh, horrible!" was the response. "Let's call him. If alive his voice may guide us to him. Charlie!" raising his own voice in a shout. "Charlie, where are you?"

"Silence was the reply. Will Hazell started warily down the dark road, his companions, Ralph Dean and Harry Lester keeping pace with him. Still the missing lad did not reply to their anxious calls, while the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled.

"A low gurgle of horrible laughter greeted their ears, and by lightning's flash a dark figure—man not animal—darted into a thicket ahead, and as Will gave a sudden bound toward it, he tripped over a motionless body

at the roadside. He recovered his balance and, with his two companions, bent startled eyes on the still form revealed in the lightning's fitful glow. One look and the trio recoiled.

"It was Charlie Haywood, stark and rigid in death. His eyeballs were distended, his tongue lolled from between his purple lips, a blue line ran around his throat, one sleeve of his coat rent away, and there on the smooth flesh gleamed a scarlet star, showing ghastly clear on his pale arm.

"Strangled!" gasped Will Hazell, pointing to the blue line around Charlie's throat. "What an end! Full of life and hope he came to India, casting his fortune with ours. Is this a forewarning? Will we, too, fall victims to these Thugs?"

"Would they? Theirs was a dangerous mission, one which would lead them across the path of these fanatics, the Thugs of India, who practiced murder to conciliate the goddess Kali, and every step was filled with danger from these silent stranglers.

"But of the matter which had brought these four boys of six, we shall learn more presently. They had left two of their friends in a hut some miles away, around noon, and started with their guns in quest of food. To this place they were returning when the strangler overtook them and robbed them of one of their best-liked companions.

"Leaving Harry Lester in charge of the body, Will and Ralph started off in the direction whence their comrade's assassin had disappeared, hoping to catch up while the play of lightning still now and then picked out objects in an otherwise rain-filled darkness. But in this they were disappointed and had just started to retrace their steps when a gunshot rang out between thunderclaps. It came from the spot where they'd left Lester.

"Ralph went crashing through the thick undergrowth, crying, 'Quick, Will, the Thugs have jumped Harry!'

"They found Harry Lester standing in the middle of the road, clutching his rifle. When he saw them com-

JESSE JAMES SONG AND POEM

By An Anonymous Author

REFRAIN

I went down to a Missouri depot;
 A good many years ago.
 The railroad agent for to see;
 He had fell upon his knees;
 And delivered up the keys
 To Frank and Jesse James.
 The James Boys had won
 Dime Novel fame
 Before they robbed the Glendale
 train.
 For Jesse James and his brother
 Frank,
 Had robbed many a Missouri train
 and bank.

The James Boys also were
 Road Agents on the trail;
 And they held up stage coaches and
 robbed the passengers
 And the U. S. Mail.

Jesse James had a wife
 Who was in mourning all of her life
 And her two children—they were
 brave;
 But, the dirty little coward,
 That shot Captain Thomas Howard,
 Said he'd lay Jesse James in his
 grave.

How the people held their breath;
 When they heard of Jesse James
 death,
 And they wondered how he come to
 die;
 He was shot on the sly,
 By little Robert Ford, who said
 He'd lay Jesse James in his grave.

Frank James was soon alert,
 For he was keen of mind,
 Cunning by nature, dauntless and
 brave;
 He took Bob Ford's trail
 And shot the dirty little coward;
 That shot Captain Howard,
 Before Jesse James was layed in his
 grave.

CHORUS

Jesse James had a wife,
 Who was in mourning all of her life
 And her two children they were brave

But the dirty little coward
 That shot Captain Thomas Howard
 Said he'd lay Jesse James in his
 grave.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES
CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

NEWARK SUNDAY NEWS, Newark, New Jersey, March 23, 1969. WHERE THE BOBBSEYS LIVE, by John T. Cunningham. An article giving the history of the Bobbsey Twins and other boys' and girls' books of the 1930's to date. Excellently illustrated with numerous covers of Tom Swift, The Speedwell Boys, The Bobbsey Twins, etc. (Sent in by John T. Dizer.)

NOTE

The Porter Library at the Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Kansas, celebrated the 50th anniversary of the publication of the first Little Blue Book. The first was published by Emanuel Haldeman-Julius at Girard, Kansas. Some 1500 titles were published during their long run. The Porter Library is still searching for some 58 titles to complete their collection.

ADS

Mr. Harry Pulfer of 2700 Mary St., La Crescenta, California 91214, wants dime novels about cars or those showing cars on the cover.

Mrs. W. B. Mitcham of 3587 West Hill St., Clarkston, Georgia, wants a copy of Sunshine and Roses by Bertha M. Clay.

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Eli A. Messier

Box 1122, Woonsocket, R. I. 02895

ing, he shouted, 'I've done it! Charlie's avenged! That Thug showed his ugly phiz too soon and swallowed an ounce of lead. See, there he lies.' And Harry pointed.

"The Thug lay half in, half out of the bushes along the path and was quite dead. He wore a turban and a breech-clout, from which peeped forth a folded strip of paper and the end of another gumaul or strangling cloth, his only weapon.

"Seizing the paper, Ralph Dean drew it out. It was wrapped in oil-skin, luckily, and he had matches in a rubber match-safe. Will held his helmet to protect the tiny blaze while Ralph scanned the paper. In the center was drawn an M in a circle of stars, and below this, in English:

"To the High Priest Thado: They are here; the secret of the Thugs is no longer a secret, and these six seek and are determined to find 'The Midnight Sun.'

"Ralph thumb-nailed another match head and read in a native scribble, which he understood fairly well:

"If Sevin loses his life, the honor is Thado's, for 'The Midnight Sun' must never leave our land."

"The boys glanced at one another, and Ralph said, 'Who is the traitor? Our purpose is known. Ten to one it's that miserable little skunk Scotty, who overheard our plans and whom we were forced to bring along in consequence.'

"The storm was rapidly dying away and they buried poor Charlie Hayward as best they could, piling up a cairn of stones temporarily to keep out jungle animals, intending to come back later with shovels and a tarpaulin. As the three boys walked away, the figure of an Indian appeared from the brush, approached the mound and shook a clenched fist at the departing trio.

"Go on—go on," he hissed, 'the path which leads to that treasure is

an avenue of death and it shall be the willing task of Thado to follow and pick you off!'

"Thado—the high priest mentioned in the message—darted off in the blackness, taking a circuitous route which would enable him to reach the hut before the boys. Having reached the clearing where stood the hut, Thado gave an imitation of a tropical bird, and almost at once a figure emerged from the thatch-roofed, primitive dwelling. It was Scotty Miggs, and as Thado stepped into view, he asked Scotty, 'Where is your comrade?'

(to be continued)

WANTED

I want hundreds of copies of New Magnet Library and Merriwell Library. Will pay \$2.50 each for fine copies.

Capt. E. P. D La Touche

C M R 3 Box 5661

APO San Francisco, Calif. 96553

References: Charles Bragin, Brooklyn

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